



Planning Commission

Housing Options Code Amendments - Briefing

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Title

Housing Options Code Amendments - Briefing

Recommended Action

Information only. No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Discussion on staff responses to public comment themes regarding the draft housing options code amendments.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development

Background and Analysis:

In November 2019 the City Council referred three housing options to the Planning Commission for consideration. In its referral the Council directed the Commission to develop an ordinance that would implement at least two of the three options specified in the referral. The three housing options identified for consideration in Olympia were selected from a list of options outlined in RCW 36.70A.600 and are summarized as follows:

Duplexes on Corner Lots - Allow duplexes on all corner lots in all zoning districts that permit single family residences.

Duplexes, Triplexes, and Courtyard Apartments - Allow duplexes, triplexes, or courtyard apartments on each parcel in one or more zoning districts that allow single family residences.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) - Allow ADUs but do not require an additional parking space, do not require the property owner to live on site, and do not have a maximum size requirement less than 1,000 square feet.

In March of 2020 the State of Washington amended the housing options included in RCW

36.70A.600 (attached). These amendments went into effect on June 11, 2020. The revisions in state law affect two of the three options under consideration by the City.

The option about duplexes, triplexes, and courtyard apartments was expanded to include additional housing types, such as fourplexes, six-plexes, and stacked apartments. Staff is not proposing to add additional housing types to the proposed code amendments at this time.

The option for ADUs was separated into distinct options and the specific size provision was modified. This means the provisions about parking, owner occupancy, and maximum size could be adopted independently of each other, whereas before all of the actions listed would have had to have been adopted at the same time.

As a result of the changes to state law, the staff recommendations issued in early March were revised to reduce the maximum size of ADUs from 1,000 square feet down to 800 square feet. A maximum size of 800 square feet is less restrictive than the City's current requirement, which is that each ADU can be no more than 66% of the size of the primary house up to 800 square feet in size.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Staff have been soliciting and collecting public comments on this proposal since January of 2020. Public comments have been shared with the Planning Commission periodically and have been posted on the project webpage within a few days of the Planning Commission meetings. The City will continue to take public comment on this proposal through the end of the public hearing, which has not yet been scheduled.

To date, there has been a fair number of comments submitted. Some of the comments are in support of the proposed amendments, some are in opposition, some express concern, and some are beyond the purview of the Planning Commission. Staff has summarized themes from the public comments that express concern and have provided brief responses to them (see attached).

Options:

None, no action is requested.

Financial Impact:

None.

Attachments:

Project Webpage
Revised Staff Recommendations Summary
Staff Response to Public Comment Themes
RCW 36.70A.600 (Revised)